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Hot Issues

Chlorprene in LaPlace, LA

ORD is supporting Region 6 on Chloroprene. High air concentrations of chloroprene have been measured at schools near a facility emitting chloroprene in LaPlace, LA. In evaluating potential near-term risk reduction measures, a question was posed as to whether an activated carbon system might be placed in schools or homes (perhaps as part of the air conditioning systems) to remove chloroprene from the indoor environment. ORD scientists are helping to address some of the community's questions and concerns.

Technical Support to Osage County, OK

Region 6 contacted ORD for groundwater expertise and technical support with ongoing issues of high salinity in Bird Creek. In October 2016, a rancher reported oil sheen, elevated temperatures, and suds in the creek. Two injection wells located approximately half a mile from the impacted area were found to have mechanical integrity issues. Region 6 conducted an initial geophysical assessment using OhmMapper (a resistivity meter that measures the electrical properties of rock and soil) to locate any conductive features that may be related to a potential brine release. However, the Region's survey results were inconclusive. ORD's assessment will include additional work with OhmMapper, followed by focused electrical resistivity imaging surveys at selected sites if warranted by the results. The affected area is located on Tribal land, Osage Nation.

ORD assists North Carolina DEQ in Cape Fear PFAS study

At the request of the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) and EPA Region 4, ORD is continuing to conduct an independent laboratory analysis of water samples being collected by NCDEQ at 13 locations in the Cape Fear River watershed over the next three weeks. The watershed is a source of drinking water for millions of North Carolina residents. ORD scientists are analyzing wastewater, surface water, ground water, and treated drinking water samples to determine the presence and concentration of the chemical "Gen X" in the samples. Gen X is a replacement chemical for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), which has an EPA-established health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion. The scientists are also analyzing the samples to determine the presence of perfluoro-2-methoxyacetic acid and perfluoro-3,5-dioxahexanoic acid, which are related perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The analysis is expected to be completed by the end of July. The lab method being used in this analyses was developed by ORD scientists and has been used in EPA research and in supporting other analysis efforts requested by states. The finding of GenX in finished drinking water was first reported in a 2016 journal article authored by ORD scientists titled "Legacy and Emerging Perfluoroalkyl Substances Are Important Drinking Water Contaminants in the Cape Fear River Watershed of North Carolina" published in *Environmental Science & Technology Letters*.

Upcoming Public Events

ORD scientists will be attending the National Environmental Health (NEHA) Annual Education Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan next week. NEHA represents more than 5000 environmental

health professionals working at the local or state level. They will be presenting a session on a proposed portfolio approach to risk assessment, with the discussion to be focused on what the needs are for public health practitioners who rely on risk assessment information to make public health decisions in their state or locality. Several other ORD scientists will participate in a "Tools of the Trade" session at the conference.

Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS) Board-EPA Joint Meeting
ORD will host a joint meeting with the ERIS Board in Oklahoma, July 11-12. ORD has developed a critical partnership with ERIS, the research arm of the Environmental Council of the States, to ensure that our research is useful and practical for states to help address on the ground problems. Oklahoma DEQ Executive Director Scott Thompson, Ken Wagner (OA), Jeaneanne Gettle (Region 4) and James McDonald (Region 6) will also participate. Agenda topics include follow-up on the ERIS survey on state research needs, pilot projects with the Environmental Council of States and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials on public and environmental health, a tour of ORD's Groundwater, Watershed and Ecosystem Restoration Division in Ada facility and research vignettes, Oklahoma DEQ overview and discussion of environmental issues facing the state, as well as perfluorinated chemicals and regional perspectives.

Tert-butanol (TBA) and Ethyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (ETBE) External Review Draft IRIS Assessments
On July 11th, ORD scientists will present an overview on the external peer review draft assessments for tert-butanol (TBA) and ethyl tertiary butyl ether (ETBE) to the SAB-CAAC committee formed to jointly review the TBA and ETBE IRIS assessments. The presentation will be part of a public teleconference focused on discussion of the charge questions associated with those external peer review drafts. This public teleconference precedes the face-to-face SAB peer review meeting, scheduled for 15-17 Aug, 2017.

Last Week Highlights

Million Hearts Web Page Now Includes EPA and ORD Air Pollution Info
Links to EPA's Air Quality Index and ORD's air pollution and health information and tools were recently made available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services-led Million Hearts 2022's Particle Pollution and Heart Disease page. The Web site is a source of information to educate health care professionals and the public about the health effects of air pollutants and actions they can take to protect themselves. Increasing environmental health literacy among physicians and advanced healthcare professionals will help identify those at highest risk, save lives, decrease morbidity, and lower healthcare costs.

State Support: Field studies to Support Cleanup at Fort Devens Superfund Site,
Last week ORD was conducting field research to provide performance verification for groundwater remediation and facilitate evaluation of new monitoring tools. ORD is providing technical assistance to Region 1 and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to investigate the impact of recently implemented remedial measures on groundwater flow and contaminant transport. Fort Devens is a former military training base with petroleum, arsenic, iron, and magnesium contamination in the groundwater, soil, and sediment.

Peer Review Meeting for EPA's Draft Report, "Proposed Modeling Approaches for a Health-Based Benchmark for Lead in Drinking Water"
ORD scientists presented ORD's integrated SHEDS-IEUBK (probabilistic exposure- dose) model and

results at the Peer Review Meeting for EPA's Draft Report, "Proposed Modeling Approaches for a Health-Based Benchmark for Lead in Drinking Water" on June 27 - 28, 2017. This peer review will provide input to Office of Water for choosing modeling approaches to use in updating the Lead and Copper Rule with a Household Action Level. Closing comments by the peer review panel were very positive.

Satellite imagery helps alert Utah DEQ to Cyanobateria Bloom

Through the Cyanobacteria Assessment Network (CyAN), EPA Region 8 requested support for the State of Utah for early access to satellite imagery based on the severity of cyanobacteria blooms from the previous year. Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) conducted its routine monthly sampling on June 12, 2017. Satellite imagery the following week indicated a bloom was developing in Lake Utah's Provo Bay, so Utah Department of Water Quality (DWQ) scientists returned to the area on June 22, 2017 for follow-up sampling. On June 29th, DEQ issued a news release (*Algal Bloom Detected in Provo Bay: Public Warned To Avoid Area*) warning the public and pets to stay out of the lake's Provo Bay. Local news articles related to the Utah DEQ press release acknowledge the bloom was first detected via satellite imagery (e.g., *See* Warnings posted for visitors due to algal bloom in Provo Bay, Public warned to avoid Provo Bay in Utah Lake due to algal bloom, Toxic algae's return to Utah Lake could force it to close for holiday weekend, Algal bloom returns to Utah Lake in Provo area).